

**Department of Defense (DoD)**  
**Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS)**  
**Field Advisory Services - *FAS***  
**Classification Appeal Decision**

<b>DoD Decision:</b>	<b>(Title to be determined by Agency), GS-0301-13</b>
<b>Initial classification:</b>	Information Manager, GS-0301-13
<b>Organization:</b>	Army Corps of Engineers District Information Management Office
<b>Date:</b>	November 01, 1995

**POSITION INFORMATION**

The duties and responsibilities of the appealed position are described in PDN, Information Manager, GS-301-13, Information Management Office, District Xxxxx. In brief, the appellant serves as Chief of the Information Management Office, with responsibility for managing the District's Information Management program which includes voice, data, telephone and radio communications; automation; audio-visual information; technical library; records and publications management; printing and copying; and mail services. The appellant directs the work through two subordinate Branch Chiefs; he works under the direction of the Deputy District Commander.

The appellant contends that two factors of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG) have been misapplied in evaluating his position. He believes that Factor Level 3-4 rather than 3-3 should be assigned, and Factor Level 4-A3 rather than 4A-2 should be credited to his position.

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

Our determination is based on the written record submitted by the appellant and the Human Resource Office and information obtained in a telephone interview with the appellant.

## SERIES AND TITLE DETERMINATION

The appellant does not dispute the title or series of his position. Titles are at the discretion of the agency for positions in the GS-301 series. Therefore the position is classified as (Title Optional), GS-301.

## GRADE LEVEL DETERMINATION

The General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG) provides criteria for determining the General Schedule grade level of supervisory positions in grades GS-5 through GS-15. It uses a point-factor evaluation approach with six evaluation factors designed specifically for supervisory positions. Under each factor there are several factor level definitions which are assigned specific point values. The points for all levels are fixed and no interpolation or extrapolation of them is permitted. Work of positions at different organizational levels often will be properly credited at the same level of a factor. If one level of a factor is exceeded, but the next higher level is not completely met or equaled, only the lower level may be credited.

### Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect

This factor assesses the general complexity, breadth, and impact of the program areas and work directed, including its organizational and geographic coverage. It also assesses the impact of the work both within and outside the immediate organization.

The GSSG defines program as the mission, functions, projects, activities, laws, rules, and regulations which an agency is authorized and funded by statute to administer and enforce. Exercise of delegated authority to carry out program functions and services constitutes the essential purpose for the establishment and continuing existence of an agency. The focus of a program may be on providing products and services to the public, State and local government, private industry, foreign countries, or Federal agencies. Most programs have an impact or effect which is external to the administering agency. In addition, comparable agencywide line or staff programs essential to the operation of an agency are considered programs in applying this guide; the impact of these programs may be limited to activities within one or a few Federal agencies.

A program may be professional, scientific, technical, administrative, or fiscal in nature. Typically, programs involve broad objectives such as: national defense; law enforcement; public health, safety, and well-being; collection of revenue; regulation of trade; collection and dissemination of information; and the delivery of benefits or services. However, specialized or staff programs may be considerably narrower in scope (e.g., merit systems protection;

nuclear safety; and agencywide personnel or budget programs). Programs are usually of such magnitude that they must be carried out through a combination of line and staff functions.

To assign a factor level, the criteria dealing with both scope and effect, as defined below, must be met.

a. SCOPE. This addresses the general complexity and breadth of:

- the program (or program segment) directed;
- the work directed, the products produced, or the services delivered.

The geographic and organizational coverage of the program (or program segment) within the agency structure is included under Scope.

b. EFFECT. This addresses the impact of the work, the products, and/or the programs described under "Scope" on the mission and programs of the customer(s), the activity, other activities in or out of government, the agency, other agencies, the general public, or others.

The appellant does not dispute the District's crediting of his position at Factor Level 1-3. We do not concur with this factor level allocation. At Level 1-2, the administrative or technical functions, activities, or services comprising the program segment directed by the supervisor have limited geographic coverage and support most of the activities comprising a typical agency field office, an area office, a small to medium military installation, or comparable activities within agency program segments. The services provided directly or significantly impact other functions and activities throughout the organizations supported. At Level 1-3, the supervisor directs a program segment performing administrative, technical, or professional work which encompasses a major metropolitan area, a State, or a small region of several States; or, when most of an area's taxpayers or businesses are covered, coverage comparable to a small city. Providing complex administrative or technical or professional services directly affecting a large or complex multimission military installation also falls at this level. A large military installation is defined in the GSSG as a military base with one or a few missions or groups of activities with a serviced population exceeding 4,000 personnel. A complex, multimission installation or a group of several organizations (directly supported by the position under evaluation) includes four or more of the following: a garrison; a medical center or large hospital and medical laboratory complex; multimillion dollar (annual) construction, civil works, or environmental cleanup projects; a test and evaluation center or research laboratory of moderate size; an equipment or product development center; a service school; a major command higher than that in which the servicing position is located or a comparable tenant activity of moderate size; a supply or maintenance depot; or equivalent activities.

We find that the scope of the appellant's duties meets the criteria for Level 1-2 in terms of the limited breadth of the services provided. The appellant provides Information Management services to about 1100 District employees in district, project and resident offices located in portions of several States. The District does not encompass an entire State or several States as depicted at Level 1-3. Neither the supported population or activities meet the criteria for credit comparable to a large or complex multimission military installation as defined at Level 1-3.

The work directed by the appellant also does not meet the effect of Level 1-3. At Level 1-3, activities, functions, or services accomplished directly and significantly impact a wide range of agency activities, the work of other agencies, or the operations of outside interests (e.g., a segment of a regulated industry), or the general public. At the field activity level (involving large, complex, multimission organizations and/or very large serviced populations) the work directly involves or substantially impacts the provision of essential support operations to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional, and administrative functions. Illustrative of this level is direction of administrative services (personnel, supply management, budget, facilities management, or similar) which support and directly affect the operations of a bureau or a major military command headquarters; a large or complex multimission military installation; an organization of similar magnitude; or a group of organizations which, as a whole, are comparable.

The services provided by the appellant do not significantly impact a wide range of agency, i.e., Army, activities, the work of other agencies, or the operations of outside interests. Neither do they directly affect the operations of a major military command headquarters, i.e., Corps Headquarters. Rather, as depicted at Level 1-2, the information services or products supplied to District employees support and significantly affect installation level, area office level, or field office operations and objectives. Level 1-2, 350 points, is assigned.

#### Factor 2. Organizational Setting

The appellant reports to the Deputy Commander/District Engineer. As the Deputy Commander/District Engineer is a full deputy, the appellant is treated as if reporting to the Deputy's Chief ( the District Commander). The District Engineer supervises a substantial number of GS-15 positions. This meets the intent of Level 2-3 where the position is accountable to an SES, flag or general officer, or equivalent or higher level position in the direct supervisory chain, or to a position which directs a substantial GS/GM-15 or equivalent level workload; or to a position which directs work through GS/GM-15 or equivalent level subordinate supervisors, officers, contractors, or others. Level 2-3, 350 points, is assigned.

#### Factor 3. Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities which are exercised

on a recurring basis. The appellant disputes the District allocation of Factor Level 3-3. The District evaluation does not indicate if factor level a or b was credited to the position, although most of the language in the position description is directly copied from the Factor Level 3-3b description in the Guide. The appellant contends that his position meets the criteria in 3-4a and b because of his responsibility for the "subprograms" that comprise the Information Management program, e.g., printing, records and publications management, automation, telecommunications, etc; multi-year program planning duties to develop a 5-year plan that must be approved by Corps HQ; and organizational design functions for the IMO. Level 3-4 is creditable when certain conditions are met, the first being:

The position involves responsibilities that are equivalent to or exceed **those described in both paragraphs a and b of Level 3-3**, i.e., both the managerial and supervisory responsibilities depicted at Level 3-3.

Positions at Level 3-3a are closely involved with high level program officials (or comparable agency level staff personnel) in the development of overall goals and objectives for assigned staff function(s), program(s), or program segment(s). For example, they direct development of data; provision of expertise and insights; securing of legal opinions; preparation of position papers or legislative proposals; and execution of comparable activities which support development of goals and objectives related to high levels of program management and development or formulation. The appellant's managerial authorities are not fully comparable to those that characterize Level 3-3a; he is not closely involved with agency-level officials in the development of the overall goals and objectives for the agency's information management program. Overall goals, objectives, and policies are established by HQ and the next lower organizational level, the Division. The appellant must submit the proposed masterplan for the District, which must conform to the policies established by both higher organizational levels, through the Division to HQ. Issues involving agencywide systems are coordinated through the Division, which also conducts program inspections, and reporting requirements are submitted through the Division. The level of involvement in agencywide program development and program management activities contemplated by Level 3-3a is not required of the appellant's position. Since both 3-3a and 3-3b must be met before considering Factor 3-4, the position is properly credited at Level 3-3b.

#### Factor 4, Personal Contacts

This is a two part factor which assesses the nature and the purpose of personal contacts related to supervisory and managerial responsibilities. The nature of the contacts, credited under Subfactor 4A, and the purpose of those contacts, credited under Subfactor 4B, must be based on the same contacts.

#### Subfactor 4A, Nature of Contacts

This subfactor covers the organizational relationships, authority or influence level, setting, and difficulty of preparation associated with making personal contacts involved in supervisory and managerial work. To be credited, the level of contacts must contribute to the successful performance of the work, be a recurring requirement, have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the position, and require direct contact. The appellant disputes the District allocation of this factor at Level 4A-2. The appellant believes that the language in Level 4A-2 specifically excludes contacts "below major command level" and therefore does not apply.

At Level 4A-2, frequent contacts are with members of the business community or the general public; higher ranking managers, supervisors, and staff of program, administrative, and other work units and activities throughout the field activity, installation, command (below major command level) or major organization levels of the agency; representatives of local public interest groups; case workers in congressional district offices; technical or operating level employees of State and local governments; reporters for local and other limited media outlets reaching a small, general population. Contacts may be informal, occur in conferences and meetings, or take place through telephone, televised, radio, or similar contact, and sometimes require nonroutine or special preparation. The agency is defined in the standard as the Army. The major command level is defined in the classification guide as a military organization next below the Departments of Army, Navy, and Air Force,. It is used as a modifier in the context of the factor level to distinguish between the local command, e.g., a base, and the headquarters organization.

According to the appellant, the majority of his contacts are with other District managers, Division staff, and his counterparts in other Districts. He also deals with vendors and occasionally contacts HQ staff and Army staff. These contacts fully meet but do not exceed Level 4A-2.

The appellant does not have the frequent contacts characteristic of Level 4A-3, i.e., high ranking military or civilian managers, supervisors, and technical staff at bureau and major organization levels of the agency (Headquarters); with agency headquarters (Army) administrative support staff; or with comparable personnel in other Federal agencies; key staff of public interest groups (usually in formal briefings) with significant political influence or media coverage; journalists representing influential city or county newspapers or comparable radio or television coverage; congressional committee and subcommittee staff assistants below staff director or chief counsel levels; contracting officials and high level technical staff of large industrial firms; local officers of regional or national trade associations, public action groups, or professional organizations; and/or State and local government managers doing business with the agency. Contacts often require extensive preparation of briefing materials or up-to-date technical familiarity with complex subject matter. The position does not meet Level 4A-3. Level 4-A2, 50 points, is assigned.

#### Subfactor 4B, Purpose of Contacts

This subfactor covers the purpose of the personal contacts credited in Subfactor 4A, including the advisory, representational, negotiating, and commitment making responsibilities related to supervision and management.

The appellant does not dispute the District allocation of this factor at Level 4B-3. We do not concur with the District crediting of that level. At Level 4B-2, the purpose of contacts is to ensure that information provided to outside parties is accurate and consistent; to plan and coordinate the work directed with that of others outside the subordinate organization; and/or to resolve differences of opinion among managers, supervisors, employees, contractors or others. In contrast, at Level 4B-3, the purpose of contacts is to justify, defend, or negotiate in representing the project, program segment(s), or organizational unit(s) directed, in obtaining or committing resources, and in gaining compliance with established policies, regulations, or contracts. Contacts at this level usually involve active participation in conferences, meetings, hearings, or presentations involving problems or issues of considerable consequence or importance to the program or program segment(s) managed.

The purpose of the appellant's contacts is primarily for resolving technical issues, e.g., establishing priorities for equipment installation, providing guidance on the master plan requirements and gathering input to the plan, reviewing purchases for compliance with guidelines and funding, advising on information security issues, providing guidance on use of telephone lines, resolving operating and service problems with subordinates and employees and managers, etc. These contacts don't reflect the frequent need to justify, defend, or negotiate over policies and regulations or significant resource questions in conferences, meetings, hearings, or presentations concerning these significant issues as found at Level 4B-3. The representation and commitment authorities required for Level 4B-3 are not fully vested in the appellant's position. Therefore, this aspect of the position is credited at Level 4B-2, 75 points.

#### Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed

This factor measures the difficulty and complexity of the basic work most typical of the organization(s) directed, as well as other line, staff, or contracted work for which the supervisor has technical or oversight responsibility, either directly or through subordinate supervisors, team leaders, or others. The highest grade which best characterizes the nature of the basic (mission oriented) nonsupervisory work performed or overseen by the organization directed and constitutes 25 percent or more of the workload (not positions or employees) of the organization is credited under this factor. The appellant does not dispute the allocation of this factor. The District has credited Level 5-6. At Level 5-6, the highest level of base work is GS-11. The GS-11 grade level constitutes at least 25 percent of the basic nonsupervisory work performed. Therefore, Level 5-6, 800 points, is assigned.

### Factor 6, Other Conditions

This factor measures the extent to which various conditions contribute to the difficulty/complexity of carrying out supervisory duties, authorities, and responsibilities. Conditions affecting work for which the supervisor is responsible (whether performed by Federal employees, assigned military, contractors, volunteers, or others) may be considered if they increase the difficulty of carrying out assigned supervisory or managerial duties and authorities. The appellant does not dispute the District's assignment of Level 6-4 to this factor. Supervision at this level requires substantial coordination and integration of a number of major work assignments of professional, scientific, technical, or administrative work comparable in difficulty to the GS-11 level. Similar to the appellant's responsibilities, supervisors at this level direct subordinate supervisors, review action documents (e.g., the master plan input of managers) to assure that they accurately reflect the policies and position of the organization and the views of the agency; and provide leadership in developing, implementing, evaluating, and improving processes and procedures to monitor the effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity of the program segment and/or organization directed.

The appellant's position does not meet the criteria for credit at Level 6-5 where supervision and oversight requires significant and extensive coordination and integration of a number of important projects or program segments of professional, scientific, technical, managerial, or administrative work comparable in difficulty to the GS-12 level. Supervision at this level involves major recommendations which have a direct and substantial effect on the organization and projects managed, for instance, making major recommendations on significant internal and external program and policy issues affecting the overall organization, such as those involving political, social, technological, and economic conditions; restructuring, reorienting, or recasting immediate and long range goals, objectives, plans, and schedules to meet substantial changes in legislation, program authority, and/or funding; and policy formulation and long range planning in connection with prospective changes in functions and programs. Therefore, Level 6-4, 1120 points, is assigned.

Summary of GSSG evaluation:

Factor Level Points

1. Program Scope and Effect 1-2 350
2. Organization Setting 2-3 350
3. Supervisory and Managerial Authority 3-3 775



4. Nature of Contacts 4A-2 50

Purpose of Contacts 4B-2 75

5. Difficulty of Typical Work 5-6 800

Directed

6. Other Conditions 6-4 1120

Total Points 3520

A total of 3520 points is credited to the appellant's position. According to the point-to-grade conversion chart on page 31 of the GSSG, this total falls within the GS-13 range (3155-3600). The appellant's position is correctly evaluated at the GS-13 level.

#### DECISION

This position is properly classified as (Title Optional), GS-301-13. This decision constitutes a classification certificate that is binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting offices within the Department of Defense.